The stories, “A Jury of her Peers”, and “Sweat symbolize a time when women were still considered as housewives and nothing else. They were sometimes even viewed as weak individuals and not as intelligent as men. Even though neither stories give a direct quote on what race’s the character’s are, they dialect and the style that these stories are written gives the reader clues. In my opinion, I believe that in the story, “A Jury of her Peers” is a small town of white folks, and in “Sweat” a small town of black folks. Taking that into consideration, the gender roles in my opinion would be somewhat similar. Of course black people back then were viewed as less than white people. Even though the black woman and men would do the same jobs or chores around the house just the same way white men or women would. From doing chores, harvesting food, and working were the common gender roles for women in the story, “Sweat”. The men in “Sweat” roles were a non-supportive abusive husband. In a “Jury of her Peers” the roles for the women were clear and simple. They were just housewives and that’s it. For men they would just go to work and provide for their family.

In the story, “A Jury of Her Peers” the males have an arrogant attitude. They view women as if they are weak individuals. An example from the story is when the county attorney had told Mrs. Peters to keep her eyes open for any clues, and then Mr. Hale ask the question, “But would the women know a clue if they did come upon it” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/A+Jury+of+Her+Peers>)? This statement that Mr. Hale made is saying that women aren’t even smart enough to know something even if they came across it. I also believe that this was a clear example on what role the women played in this story. This also gave me the impression that no man believed that women could be a sheriff or do any kind of “men” job better than them. Mr. Hale’s statement about the women finding a clue made me think that he also might have took that as an insult toward his manhood. He probably was the type of guy who felt women only had one place and that was working in the fields and in the kitchen. Once again the county attorney’s chauvinistic views are revealed in his statement, “for all their worries what would we do without the ladies” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/A+Jury+of+Her+Peers>)? The county attorney feels as if the women were not around who would do the cooking, cleaning, and raising the children. Another example from the story is another statement that the county attorney made, “Dirty towels not much of a housekeeper, would you say, ladies” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/A+Jury+of+Her+Peers>)? These two examples illustrate how women are viewed by society in this story. The men role’s in this story was clear and straight to the point. They were the head of the household and soul provider of the family. They also felt as if they were superior to women. An example from the story to clarify this would be, “But would the women know a clue if they did come upon it” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/A+Jury+of+Her+Peers>)? This example shows how men viewed women as dimwitted individuals.

In the story, “Sweat” the gender roles were somewhat reversed. Instead of the husband being the bread winner it was the mother. The women in this story were not only just the soul provider for the household they also had the role of a housewife to. An example from the story states that, “But she was a wash woman, and Monday morning meant a great deal to her. So she collected the soiled clothes on Saturday when she returned the clean things. Sunday night after church, she sorted them and put the white things to soak. It saved her almost a half day’s start” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/Sweat>). This statement describing Delia Jones shows that her job meant a lot to her because it provided earnings for the household. Delia had this job because women were not allowed to workout side the house. So they generally took these menial low paying jobs to help support their families. This statement also gives me the impression that Delia was dedicated to her job. Unlike the story, “A Jury of Her Peers” the men did not care that the women would work outside all day without being in the house. This also would have been unheard of back in that time. Also in the other story women having the profession as a wash woman was not common. Another example from the story says, “Git whatsoever yo’heart desiers, Honey. Wait a minute, Joe. Give huh two bottles uh strawberry soda water, uh quart uh parched ground-peas, an’ a block un chewin gum” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/Sweat>). This example gave me the impression that Sykes was not acting his role as head of the household and he was not true to his marriage vowels. In the other story a man not being true to his wife was uncommon. Sykes also seemed unappreciative for what Delia was doing. From cooking, cleaning, and making sure he had clean clothes on his back were some of the things that Sykes took for granted. However in the other story, the men valued the women taking the role of a traditional housewife. The male’s role in this story was the complete opposite. They did not contribute to the household in anyway. In fact there role as a husband was a non-supportive abusive husband. The male figure was also a selfish character in the story. He would only come home to eat the food that his wife had prepared. An example from the story states that, “Mah tub of suds is filled yo’ belly with vittles more times than yo’ hands is filled it. Mah sweat is done paid for this house and ah reckon Ah kin keep on sweatin in it” (<http://intro-to-literature.wikispaces.com/Sweat>). This statement that Delia said supports my argument that Sykes did not step up to his role. It also shows how ignorant he was toward his wife.

As for my conclusion the gender roles for these two stories were the complete opposite. The women in, “A Jury of Her Peers” would play the common role as a housewife. The men would play the role as the soul provider for the household. Also the women did not have as many rights back then as the men did. They were viewed as weak-minded individuals and not able to do any “man’s” job. A woman being a housewife was also the traditional role that they had back then. In the story, “Sweat” the women would be the soul providers and the housewives. While as the men they were non-supportive abusive husbands. Taking in consideration, back in the time of this story black people did not have that many opportunities. So they had to take the low paying jobs. That is why they were more argumentative and struggled more. A woman washing clothes was common back then, but not doing the neighborhoods to support her family while the husband just sat around and did nothing. In my opinion, I enjoyed reading these two stories. They gave me an insight on how both black and white genders had lived back then. In gave me an example on how there lives had similarities and differences. It also made me understand that back then whether you were black or white, if you were a female you would still looked down upon in society. In today’s world these views toward women remain the same. Women are still underpaid in the workforce today. They are still paid less than a man doing the same job. An example would be a news anchor. At a certain time, a women anchor was unheard of as a lead anchor over a newscast. Despite these oppositions women rights have prevailed somewhat. Women are now Senators, CEO’s, Store Managers, and even members of the Supreme Court Justice. Most of all we now have a women candidate for presidency Hilary Clinton. I don’t think that there is a more superb example of a women’s achievement than becoming a candidate to be the United States President. African Americans now have achieved equal opportunities for employment, housing, and voting. What I learned from reading these stories is that an individual should never decide on who they like or who should get a job based on there gender. I believe that the better man or woman who is more qualified for the job should get there decision. I also believe that people should not based there decision on race either. Someone’s race, color, or creed should not disqualify them from what they want to achieve. The constitution is a perfect example on what this country was founded on. The preamble of the constitution states, “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.preamble.html>). In my summation I now realize that society would be a better place if the male role model would take his proper role in society.